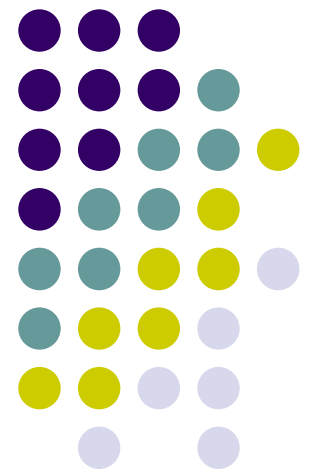# Development of a Great Lakes Mercury Phase-Down Strategy
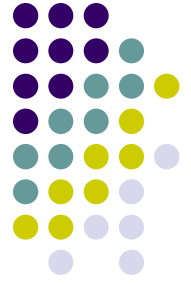
Alexis Cain

USEPA, Region 5

September 19, 2006

Great Lakes Regional Collaboration

- Toxic Pollutants– implications for GLBTS work?

- Mercury: GL Restoration Strategy:
  - Reaffirmed commitment to virtual elimination of mercury and other persistent toxic pollutants
  - Called for "significant reductions in mercury emissions from coal fired power plants" by 2010
  - "By 2015, full phase-outs of intentionally added mercury bearing products, as possible."
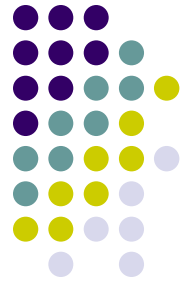
Product Stewardship

- Great Lakes Restoration Strategy: "A basin-wide mercury product stewardship strategy should be developed to complete phase-outs of mercury uses, including a mercury waste management component, as practicable."

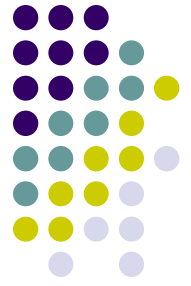# Endorsement of Mercury Product Stewardship Strategy

- Council of GL Govs and GL and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (December 12, 2005 letter to President Bush):

  "The Great Lakes States, Cities and Tribes will develop a basin-wide mercury product stewardship strategy, aimed at managing mercury wastes and reducing the use of mercury-containing products."

Workgroup

- Formed in Spring 2006, at initiative of GLNPO/Region5
- Representatives from:
  - each of the Great Lakes States
  - Tribes: GLIFWC, Chippewa Ottowa, Lac du Flambeau Band, Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi, Sault Sainte Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, Seneca Nation,
  - USEPA
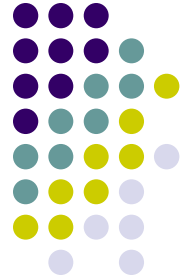 - Coordinator: IL Waste Management & Research Center

Workgroup Progress

- Preliminary agreement on criteria for selecting priority products and sectors

  - Magnitude (amount of mercury used/released)

  - Potential for direct exposure, especially to sensitive populations

  - Untapped potential for reduction

- Preliminary Selection of five priority products and sectors

Priority Products

- Dental amalgam
- Thermostats
- Switches Relays & Control Devices
- Lamps
- Fever Thermometers

Priority Sectors

- Schools
- Steel Manufacturing/Scrap Industry
- Manufacturing
- Health Care/Veterinary
- Households

Report Contents

- For each priority product/sector
    - Background on uses/releases
    - Existing programs
    - Recommended actions (mandatory and voluntary)
    - Justification
- Cross-cutting strategies
    - Labeling, reporting requirements
    - Outreach, education
    - Collection infrastructure

Next Steps

- Completion of draft by end of CY
- Get input from key stakeholders
- 2007: Begin process of getting state, tribal, municipal sign-off